

Personal Health Records as a Tool for Prevention

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Personal Health Records (PHRs)

- No consensus definition
 - Attributes identified by Connecting for Health
 - Functions of PHRs being defined in the marketplace
- Personal health records or personal health system?
- Personal health records as derivative of electronic health records?

PHRs and Personal Health Management

- Emerging expectations and concept to describe extent and nature of consumers' involvement in and responsibility for health decisions
- Premised on consumerism and active orientation toward health

“Activated” or “Empowered” Consumers

- Regularly seek out health information
- Maintain or cultivate a healthy lifestyle
- Participate in shared decision-making with providers
- Monitor health conditions
- Maintain personal health records

Examples of PHR Functions Important to Prevention

- Reminders
- Guidelines
- Personal library
- Support
- Trackers
- Non-shared personal information

PHRs and Chronic Disease Management

- Medicare and HHS' chronic disease programs, although they affect a large number of people, do not reach many segments of the public, particularly many in need of preventive health information and services, nor do the programs cover many of the prevention and information activities that HHS is already heavily invested in.

PHRs: Whole-life Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

- Continuity of care from the individual or designees point of view
- Business models that permit employer and insurer-independence
- Potentially appealing as a basic health history for those who don't have serious health issues

Rationale for PHRs as Prevention Tool

- Unique mechanism to engage individuals at different life stages in their own health
- Novel platform for prevention activities that can include information, recommendations and attitudinal and behavioral messages
- Address some aspects of healthcare disparities

Examples of Potential User Groups of Publicly-Sponsored PHRs

- New high school graduates
- Every client of public healthcare system
- Medicare, Medicaid and SCHIP beneficiaries
- Employees without health insurance or in plans without patient access to EHRs

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